The Teachings of Timothy Jennings  
An Evaluation by Eugene Prewitt

Introduction

I first heard of Timothy Jennings in connection with the Good News Tour. This was not, in my mind, a positive association. But it was not until a friend of mine suggested that my students listen to a series of his lectures that I took a personal interest in his teachings.

I listened to six hour-long lectures by Dr. Jennings while taking copious notes. From these notes I wrote a brief paper for the administrative committee at Ouachita Hills College. This paper strongly recommended that we not assign our students to listen to Dr. Jennings’ lectures.

Several months later I had, in one week, two individuals call me and ask about Dr. Jennings’ teachings. After writing the second response (to the two individuals) I concluded that I should place my paper to the executive committee in the public domain. I posted it on my website.

About three weeks later I was surprised to receive a call from Dr. Jennings himself. He kindly informed me that I had misrepresented him in my paper and had not acted in harmony with Bible principles by placing that paper in the public domain without having first contacted him.

That phone call persuaded me that I had not in all respects well summarized his teachings. I did not, however, persuade me that Brother Jennings was safer than I had first indicated.

This paper will replace the original. I hope to improve on that paper by more accurately representing what Timothy Jennings really teaches, by giving him an opportunity to see the paper before it is in the public eye, and by clarifying statements that were ambiguous or easily misunderstood.

But first, let me address the reason that I do not believe I must confront false teachers before exposing them. A false teacher neither offends me nor sins against me. I do not pretend to know his character. He is not ashamed of his teachings (if indeed he places them in the public domain). I oppose his teachings, not his person. And for that reason Romans 16:17-18 rather than Matthew 18, applies to my situation.

Yet I will admit that it is generally a good thing to talk to someone about what they believe before telling someone else what they believe. Misunderstandings are common. In the case of Mr. Jennings I felt that I well understood his position before writing. And after talking with him, I feel that I was fundamentally correct regarding what he teaches.

Initial Summary

Dr. Jennings’ lectures are content rich and are profusely illustrated. And if I am correct, Dr. Jennings is in grave danger.
Like Dr. Kellogg of yesteryear, he has been used by God to uncover a great deal of truth in his professional studies. His teachings regarding the relation of the various faculties of the mind (will, appetites, passions, reason, conscience, emotions, imagination, etc.) are profound and incredibly consistent with EGW’s teaching on the same.

And like Dr. Kellogg of yesteryear, he has woven into his presentations a deadly net of falsehoods that destroy the most fundamental of Christian virtues – faith. I do not mean that Dr. Jennings teaches any of the same errors taught by Dr. Kellogg. Rather, I mean that both doctors eventually became icons of a dangerous mixture of truth and error.

In short, Dr. Jennings believes that God takes no initiative in causing prolonged pain during the destruction of the wicked, and that to prolong or cause punitive suffering is torture and that such a view of God (that he would cause prolonged pain as part of punishment) destroys love and trust.

More than this view, which is explained thoroughly in two of the lectures given at the Forest Lake church in Florida, and is alluded to in two others, Dr. Jennings has espoused a theory of the atonement that mirrors in some fundamental ways the moral influence theory.

He does not, for example, believe in substitutionary atonement. He makes light of the idea that sins must be “paid” for.

Jenning’s epistemology is troubling. He argues, when defending the views above, that we must reject any doctrine that requires us not to reason. But he explains this in such a way that if we believe that God is loving, and that God burns people for rebelling, such a dichotomy is not reasonable and the some point of it must be rejected.

Thus he, in his recorded lectures, inadvertently sets individual reason above inspiration. When a man’s reason can not grasp the harmony of two ideas (as Satan could not perceive any harmony between justice and mercy, a similar perplexity to the one facing Jennings), the man concludes that at least one of the ideas must be flawed. This has always been the essence of unbelief.

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1 Dr. Jennings does not acknowledge that he undermines faith by his teachings. He feels that I misrepresent him on this point. To this I counter that faith is simply living by and believing all that God says. Any one, then, who teaches that God’s plain statements cannot be understood literally, undermines faith. More on this later.

2 Dr. Jennings distinguishes his belief from the moral influence theory on the basis that he believes Jesus did much more than simply make a demonstration. He accomplished, Jennings correctly teaches, a great deal that is essential to our salvation. He worked out a perfect character that is made available to us. Nevertheless, this sounds more like a refinement of the theory than a repudiation of it. Peter Abelard was seeking to get away from the very same ideas of penal justice that Dr. Jennings seeks to discredit.
Jennings also repudiates ideas associated with the investigative judgment. He thinks not that sins are blotted from a record in heaven during the judgment. He mocks the idea that our personal sins will be forever forgotten.

These views, woven into such a collection of profound insights into human nature, make for an extremely cogent parallel to the book *Living Temple* with its incredible insights into physiology interwoven around a philosophy of life-is-God.

And like the book *Living Temple*, which was critically evaluated by Jones, Waggoner, and several other notable messengers of God, and was pronounced harmless by them all, the lectures of Dr. Jennings seem to have elicited no protest from the audience. (This I gather from the 30 minute question and answer period at the conclusion of the final lecture.)

I must conclude that it would be irresponsible to encourage anyone to listen to his lectures.

**The Doctrine of Justice**

I have written elsewhere regarding the doctrine of justice. See, for example, my article on the draft.

There are several Bible facts about justice that relate to this discussion.

First, the angels (who are in the know) believe God’s judgments are perfectly fair. These heavenly beings witness pain and suffering caused by the seven last plagues. These plagues are punitive rather than corrective. (That is, they occur after the close of human probation.) And the suffering is fair, it is just. God is “holy” who judges the wicked. That is obvious, “manifest”, according to the righteous ones in Rev 15.

... the rivers and fountains of waters ... became blood. 5 And I heard the angel of the waters say, “Thou art righteous, O Lord, which art, and wast, and shalt be, because thou hast judged thus. 6 For they have shed the blood of saints and prophets, and thou hast given them blood to drink; for they are worthy.” 7 And I heard another out of the altar say, “Even so, Lord God Almighty, true and righteous are thy judgments.”

And the fourth angel poured out his vial upon the sun; and power was given unto him to scorch men with fire. 9 And men were scorched with great heat, and blasphemed the name of God, which hath power over these plagues: and they repented not to give him glory. 10 ... and [some] gnawed their tongues for pain, 11 And blasphemed the God of heaven because of their pains and their sores, and repented not of their deeds. Re 16:4-11

And [the righteous] sing ... saying, “Great and marvellous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints. 4 Who shall not fear thee, O Lord, and glorify thy name? for thou only art holy: for all nations shall come and worship before thee; for thy judgments are made manifest.” Re 15:3-4.
Second, when brethren study the Bible and despite their best efforts to harmonize yet can not see eye-to-eye, God has ordained the gifts of the Spirit to serve as a protection. They keep us from being blown around by winds of doctrine. And on the question of God's executive judgment, the prophetic gift speaks plainly.

And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; . . . That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; Eph 4:11, 14.

In the Garden of Gethsemane Christ suffered in man's stead, and the human nature of the Son of God staggered under the terrible horror of the guilt of sin, until from His pale and quivering lips was forced the agonizing cry, "O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me"; but if there is no other way by which the salvation of fallen man may be accomplished, then "not as I will, but as thou wilt" (Matthew 26:39). {TMK 64.2}

The power that inflicted retributive justice upon man's substitute and surety, was the power that sustained and upheld the suffering One under the tremendous weight of wrath that would have fallen upon a sinful world. Christ was suffering the death that was pronounced upon the transgressors of God's law. It is a fearful thing for the unrepenting sinner to fall into the hands of the living God. This is proved by the history of the destruction of the old world by a flood, by the record of the fire which fell from heaven and destroyed the inhabitants of Sodom. But never was this proved to so great an extent as in the agony of Christ, . . . when He bore the wrath of God for a sinful world. . . . {TMK 64.3}

Man has not been made a sin-bearer, and he will never know the horror of the curse of sin which the Saviour bore. No sorrow can bear any comparison with the sorrow of Him upon whom the wrath of God fell with overwhelming force. Human nature can endure but a limited amount of test and trial. The finite can only endure the finite measure, and human nature succumbs; but the nature of Christ had a greater capacity for suffering; for the human existed in the divine nature, and created a capacity for suffering to endure that which resulted from the sins of a lost world. The agony which Christ endured, broadens, deepens, and gives a more extended conception of the character of sin, and the character of the retribution which God will bring upon those who continue in sin. The wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ. {TMK 64.4}

Satan rushes into the midst of his followers and tries to stir up the multitude to action. But fire from God out of heaven is rained upon them, and the great men, and mighty men, the noble, the poor and miserable, are all consumed together. I saw that some were quickly destroyed, while others suffered longer. They were punished according to the deeds done in the body. Some were many days consuming, and just as long as there was a portion of them unconsumed, all the sense of suffering
remained. Said the angel, "The worm of life shall not die; their fire shall not be quenched as long as there is the least particle for it to prey upon."  {EW 294.1}

The wicked receive their recompense in the earth. Proverbs 11:31. They "shall be stubble: and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the Lord of hosts." Malachi 4:1. Some are destroyed as in a moment, while others suffer many days. All are punished "according to their deeds." The sins of the righteous having been transferred to Satan, he is made to suffer not only for his own rebellion, but for all the sins which he has caused God's people to commit. His punishment is to be far greater than that of those whom he has deceived. After all have perished who fell by his deceptions, he is still to live and suffer on. In the cleansing flames the wicked are at last destroyed, root and branch--Satan the root, his followers the branches. The full penalty of the law has been visited; the demands of justice have been met; and heaven and earth, beholding, declare the righteousness of Jehovah.  {GC 673.1}

Third, the idea that men receive a reward that is “according to their works” is a theme of scripture. The reward of the wicked includes “tribulation” and “wrath” and punishment more sore than dying without mercy under the law of Moses.

2Co 5:10 . . . that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.
1Pe 1:17 . . . without respect of persons judgeth according to every man’s work.
2Co 11:15 . . . whose end shall be according to their works.
Re 20:12 . . . the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works.
Re 20:13 . . . they were judged every man according to their works.
Re 2:23 . . . I will give unto every one of you according to your works.
2Ch 6:30 . . . and render unto every man according unto all his ways
Jer 17:10 . . . I try the reins, even to give every man according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doings.
Ps 62:12 . . . for thou renderest to every man according to his work.
Isa 3:10 Say ye to the righteous, that it shall be well with him: for they shall eat the fruit of their doings. Isa 3:11 Woe unto the wicked! it shall be ill with him: for the reward of his hands shall be given him.
Mt 16:27 . . . and then he shall reward every man according to his works.

Ro 2:5 But after thy hardness and impenitent heart treasurest up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God; Ro 2:6 Who will render to every man according to his deeds: Ro 2:7 To them who by patient continuance in well doing seek for glory and honour and immortality, eternal life: Ro 2:8 But unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath, Ro 2:9 Tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that doeth evil, . . . For there is no respect of persons with God.
He 10:29  Of how much **sorer punishment**, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace? 30  For we know him that hath said, **Vengeance belongeth unto me, I will recompense**, saith the Lord. And again, The Lord shall judge his people. 31  **It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.** Heb 10:28-31.

Fourth, Christ’s illustrations of the executive judgment harmonize well with the idea of a finite punishment that is painful and precisely just. And when Ezra prayed about God’s judgments on Israel (that included great suffering and horrible deaths inflicted by Babylon), he acknowledged that they had been punished “less” than they deserved.

Mt 18:34  And **his lord was wroth, and delivered him to the tormentors, till he should pay all that was due unto him.**

Ezra 9:13  Seeing that thou our God hast punished us **less than our iniquities deserve.**

Fifth, the danger of experiencing the wrath of God is part of the third angel’s message.

Re 14:10  The same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb:

In short the doctrine of justice is present truth and it is no surprise that the devil would oppose it.

**Dethroning Reason**

Now when I talked to Dr. Jennings on the phone (April 17, 2009) he referred me to a statement where Ellen White talks about the idea of God torturing sinners as being a falsehood that overthrows reason.

From listening to his lectures it seems to me that Dr. Jennings believes that the purposeful painful punishment of sinners is irrational if one believes in a loving God. Now to me it seems perfectly rational that a loving God would nevertheless be willing to be fair even if being so was painful to himself. To inflict pain on the man that ordered torture for a humble servant of Jesus seems only just. In fact, it is when the persecutors are already dead that the blood of the martyrs calls out for God to avenge “our blood” in Revelation 6. So painful punishment seems rational to me and irrational to Jennings.

But whether it seems rational to Tim Jennings or myself is not a very important question. God is wiser than man. We must assume that his ideas are higher than ours even when we can not attain to them. Nevertheless, reason is one of the ruling powers in the Christian mind. It, rather than the appetites, is to guide the will. And when reason is “dethroned”, it is not because a man chooses to believe God’s Word. Rather, it is because he has become either a lunatic or a slave of his passions.
The following is the statement to which Tim was referring. I hope you can see that it does in no way excuse a man for exalting his reason over the plain statements of scripture. See the last sentence where teachers are bidden to check their sources of authority.

“I have since thought that many inmates of the lunatic asylums were brought there by experiences similar to my own. Their tender consciences have been stricken with a sense of sin, and their trembling faith dared not claim the promised pardon of God. They have listened to descriptions of the orthodox hell until it has seemed to curdle the very blood in their veins, and burnt an impression upon the tablets of their memory. Waking or sleeping, the frightful picture has ever been before them, until reality has become lost in imagination, and they see only the wreathing flames of a fabulous hell and hear only the shrieking of the damned. Reason has become dethroned and the brain is filled with the wild phantasy of a terrible dream. Those who teach the doctrine of an eternal hell, would do well to look more closely after their authority for so cruel a belief. {LS80 153.3}

Ellen White does attack as contrary to our sense of justice the doctrine of eternal torment, or the doctrine that God enjoys punishing the wicked. But the very logic of the statements implies that a finite punishment would be a just yet unpleasant reality. See the second portion of the appendix.

The irony is that Satan, by teaching eternal torment, hoped to lead men to some of the very same conclusions that Tim Jennings has espoused. Men would conclude that God’s punishments must not be expected to be “literally” fulfilled.

Satan told his angels to make a special effort to spread the deception and lie first repeated to Eve in Eden, Thou shalt not surely die. And as the error was received by the people, and they believed that man was immortal, Satan led them still further to believe that the sinner would live in eternal misery. Then the way was prepared for Satan to work through his representatives, and hold up God before the people as a revengeful tyrant; that those who do not please him, he will plunge into hell, and cause them ever to feel his wrath; and that they will suffer unutterable anguish, while he will look down upon them with satisfaction, as they writhe in horrible sufferings and eternal flames. Satan knew that if this error should be received, God would be dreaded and hated by very many, instead of being loved and admired; and that many would be led to believe that the threatenings of God’s word would not be literally fulfilled; for it would be against his character of benevolence and love, to plunge beings whom he had created into eternal torments. {1SG 114.2}

Though Jennings has not gone as far down the road as the universalists (Ellen White mentions them in the context of the statement above), yet he has taken one key step in the same direction. The “threatenings,” some of them, have been explained as non-literal prophesies.
Still it is true that lost men, even while being consumed, will be bemoaning their sins. The thoughts of one such man are recorded by Solomon.

Pr 5:11 And thou mourn at the last, when thy flesh and thy body are consumed, 12 And say, How have I hated instruction, and my heart despised reproof; 13 And have not obeyed the voice of my teachers, nor inclined mine ear to them that instructed me! 14 I was almost in all evil in the midst of the congregation and assembly.

While this essay is far from a thorough treatment of justice, and even further from a rounded treatment of atonement (see my article, “Atonement Cleansing”), yet it is sufficient I think to demonstrate why Jennings should not be followed as he travels down the road of being wise “above that which is written.”

Eze 33:20 Yet ye say, The way of the Lord is not equal. O ye house of Israel, I will judge you every one after his ways.

God's ways are fair.

Appendix Part I – A Critique of the Six Lectures Given at Forest Lake Academy

Lecture One
In his first lecture Dr. Jennings sets the stage for what he will develop more thoroughly in lectures four and six. He begins to explain that “lies believed” destroy love and trust. Then he begins to hint that the audience may even believe lies. Then, to paraphrase (all statements in quotes are quotes from my notes, paraphrases only of Dr. Jennings) him from my notes,

“The most destructive lies we believe are lies about God himself. Some of you will be shocked by the evidence. I want you to look at the information and weigh it.”

This idea is important to him. He emphasizes repeatedly that:

“Trust broken makes fear and selfishness...as a natural consequence. This idea is known as survival of the fittest – the opposite of God’s principle of love.”

What comes clear later is that if one believes in the standard Adventist position on the executive judgment and the substitutionary atonement, one will not trust God, but will become selfish and self protecting from such a cruel Being.

The first lecture ends with six suggestions. Suggestion number two introduces an idea that will be repeated throughout the series,

“If you have seen me [Jesus], you have seen the Father.”
This Jennings develops into a hermeneutic such that if Jesus didn’t punish then the Father won’t, if Jesus could forgive men before dying, then the Father could forgive men without Jesus dying. But that comes in lectures 4 and 6, and the person listening doesn’t realize what the repetition of the “principle” is setting him up to experience.

Lecture 2

This is the lecture on the Law of Liberty. It is fascinating. The short of it is that if a husband, for example, threatens to beat his wife if she will not obey, the natural consequence of this will be that

“love is damaged, and eventually destroyed. A desire to rebel is instilled.”

“If the woman stays, she loses her individuality, she becomes a shadow person.”

The principle seems true and obvious as it relates to marriage. But Dr. Jennings has wider applications in mind, and he begins to make them in this lecture. If you believe that God threatens disobedience with punishment, “love is damaged” and see above for the rest. This places the cause for rebellion squarely at the feet of whoever inspired a prophet to threaten. Dr. Jennings indicates that he is very aware of the implications (though there is no evidence he is thinking of the implication just mentioned).

On a light note in a serious article, he says that the “stimulus package of Bush is an example of the law of love.” I don’t think this represents his best judgment.

In this lecture Jennings introduces one of what he calls “lies”, namely that:

“One of the lies is that the law of God brings death.”

He is saying that the law does not condemn men in such a way as to require their death.

He says:

“Does God have to use his power to kill? To inflict penalties?”

The implied answer is “no.”

There is an illustration that Jennings uses four or five times in his lecture series. Imagine, he says, a happily married couple. Someone approaches the wife with digitally altered photographs that falsely prove that her faithful husband has been having an affair. How will she react. Each time he uses the illustration he concludes:

“Lies believed lead to fear and selfishness.”
The problem with this illustration and conclusion is that it is one-sided. If the only kind of lie that could be told about God is that He is cruel, Jennings’ illustration would be more sensible. But there is an opposite type of lie, that God accepts you as you are. What does this lie lead to? Not “fear and selfishness” but self-confidence and selfishness. There are many lies and they produce a plethora of evil effects.

**Lecture Three**

In this lecture, on the family, Jennings begins to really advertise for his future lectures on the issues. He begins by making the case that lies about God are commonly believed and are the reason that people have problems with their relation to God. He urges people to come to the fourth lecture.

Like much in the first two lectures, this lecture is full of useful material on human-human interaction. But he makes one questionable point by suggesting a different translation of the proverb. I have not checked into this, but my gut reaction is that this is the wrong solution to the problem of well-raised lost children:

> “Raise a child according to his way and when he is old he will not depart from it.”

Ironically, and interestingly, Dr. Jennings makes a good point about the damage done by threatening consequences to children and then not following through. He says the children will learn not to trust their parent. If only he had thought the implications of this through in relation to his theology regarding the judgment....

**Lecture Four**

“Our weapons are not spiritual, the battlefield is the mind, a war over ideas about what God is like. What happened in [a patient’s] mind when the preacher said what he did? She was hardened.”

This is the introduction to the primary lecture on what God is like.

The lecture boils down to “seven basic strategies” Satan uses, and defenses that “demolish Satan’s strongholds in our minds.”

1. “Lies about God.”
   
   “That he is cruel, etc.”
   
   Lies harden us, and we create schemes to be protected from God.
   
   “God will examine our healthy brother Jesus in our place.”

This second of what Jennings calls “lies” about God examining Jesus, is very subtle. It is the first attack on the idea of substitutionary atonement in the lectures. It mocks, by illustration, the idea of the Father accepting the righteousness of Jesus in place of our life in the judgment.
And how do we escape the lies?

“Defense: Examine the facts about the Father through the lens of Jesus. Don’t read the Old Testament to see Jesus, but study Jesus to understand the Old Testament.”

He sets up this unreal dichotomy as a standard. Such a standard would allow one to reinterpret obvious OT examples of executive execution.

Satan’s next strategy:

“2. Antithetical beliefs. These turn off our brains.” Examples
“God is love.”
“Burn you in hell forever.”
“love and hell” are antithetical
“god is love” and “burn in hell” these “CANNOT BE TRUE AT THE SAME TIME”

Jennings must sense that at this point some in the audience are feeling very uncomfortable. The last statement seemed to indicate that even a finite hell where God burns men can not be true if “God is love.”

“Someone says ‘I take God at faith, I just believe him.’ “you just turned off your brain.”

This is a direct exalting of human reason over inspiration. But he comes back and challenges:

“You think you have some verses, some inspired materials, that indicate that God will burn people? Bring them this afternoon, I would love to tell you what I believe about hell.”

He says that the idea that “God will inflict penalties” is antithetical to “God is love.” He says “God does not use his power to inflict external penalties. All God has to do is let go and if he lets go, we will die.”

What is the defense against such so-called “lies” (that originate in Bible verses...)?

“Examine your beliefs in light of truth. Reject anything that requires you not to think.” And by this he seems to mean, anything that challenges your understanding, such as the harmony of justice and mercy.

Satan’s third strategy – to remove the meaning behind symbols.
He talks about how we sing about being cleansed “by the blood” as an example of an empty metaphor. He explains that “blood is life” and “the blood of Jesus is the life of Jesus.” “We are cleansed by the life of Jesus.”
But we are not cleansed, in the metaphor, by the blood in the lamb. We are cleansed by the blood spilled from the lamb. We are cleaned by the death, the shedding of the life, of Jesus. And this is an important point.

The fourth through seventh strategies are mostly well explained and harmless. But on the fifth... “Surrendering judgment to others.”

Here methinks that Dr. Jennings shows that he has read Graham Maxwell. He makes a point that we can not surrender our beliefs to the “28 beliefs” of the church and then launches into the “servants or friends” theme of Maxwell. But this is speculative on my part and he doesn’t make any applications here.

**Lecture Five**

Lecture 5 was on Depression. I didn’t take notes and was doing two things at once while listening to it.

**Lecture Six**

“Our Goal is to know God better, to develop trust and love and faith in God.”

Jennings begins with a list of myths about forgiveness.

One of these myths identified by Jennings is that “Forgiveness comes after the offender says ‘I’m sorry’”

His good point, that we should forgive before persons apologize, is extrapolated into a statement about forgiveness of sins: God has already forgiven us, even before we ask.

But while it is true that God loves us, gave all to save us, is not angry with us, yet the Bible places forgiveness as conditioned on confession and repentance.

“ Myth three: Forgiveness requires payment.”

And this is the attack on substitutionary atonement.

“Anybody heard that forgiveness requires payment for our sins?”

“How many believe that Jesus died to pay our debt? That God forgives our debts as we forgive our debtors? If you collect the debt, can you forgive it? If you forgive it, can you collect it?”

Thus he confuses the issue of relationship and justice. I forgive my debtors as a response to God forgiving me. But I am not their Lawgiver. They sinned against God and hurt me. I forgive the
hurt. The judgment deals with the sin. So God says “vengeance is mine, saith the Lord, and I will repay.”

He observes that in 1 Cor 13, “Love keeps no record of wrong” and uses this to belittle the idea of a record being kept of our sins in heaven.

He says that our view of atonement is a “split in the godhead” and thus false.

“Did Jesus need appeasement? Where did this distortion come from?”

Thus he seeks to equate what really expresses the idea of justice with what he calls appeasement. And that is a great fault.

He addresses this apparent objection to his views: “Without shedding of blood is no remission” He 9:22.

And his answer is a modern tweaking of the moral influence theory. Jesus died to show us love and thus change us. It is one truth pitted against another in such a way as to make the second look like a lie.

“‘[You say] the Father applies Christ’s record to our record and declares us innocent when we accept him.’ In what universe will it ever be true that Adam never sinned? If we say God declares us innocent, we make God out to be a liar.”

“The records will last through all eternity.”

You will find an attack on the doctrine of the blotting out of sins; you will find an attack on the use of records in the judgment of consecrated persons; You will find that sins are blotted “not from a book” but from our character. You will find that the punishment for sin is the damage the sinner experiences in sinning.

You will find him answer an objection or two about God’s OT threatenings by saying that God was desperate and risked being misunderstood by rebels by communicating in a way they might listen – in other words, (my extrapolation, not his:) God didn’t mean what He said.

You will find in the Q and A, after the lecture, that a lady asked him more about “hell.”

His summary is that God is a fire that burns sin, not material things, so the people won’t be burned, but will die naturally from the brightness of God and the sin in them will be naturally consumed by the fire of God’s presence, so God will not actually do anything to destroy them.

And this flies entirely in the face of both scripture and the Spirit of Prophecy.
You will find the strangest argument from the Greek word for sulfur in the third angel’s message.

**Appendix Part II – Ellen White on an Eternally Burning Hell and the Sufferings of the Lost**

How repugnant to every emotion of love and mercy, and even to our sense of justice, is the doctrine that the wicked dead are tormented with fire and brimstone in an eternally burning hell; that for the sins of a brief, earthly life they are to suffer torture as long as God shall live. Yet this doctrine has been widely taught, and is still embodied in many of the creeds of Christendom. Said a learned doctor of divinity: “The sight of hell-torments will exalt the happiness of the saints forever. When they see others who are of the same nature and born under the same circumstances, plunged in such misery, and they so distinguished, it will make them sensible of how happy they are.” Another used these words: “While the decree of reprobation is eternally executing on the vessels of wrath, the smoke of their torment will be eternally ascending in view of the vessels of mercy, who, instead of taking the part of these miserable objects, will say, Amen, Alleluia! praise ye the Lord!”  {GC88 535.1}

Where, in the pages of God’s Word, is such teaching to be found? Will the redeemed in Heaven be lost to all emotions of pity and compassion, and even to feelings of common humanity? Are these to be exchanged for the indifference of the stoic, or the cruelty of the savage?—No, no; such is not the teaching of the Book of God. Those who present the views expressed in the quotations given above may be learned and even honest men; but they are deluded by the sophistry of Satan. He leads them to misconstrue strong expressions of Scripture, giving to the language the coloring of bitterness and malignity which pertains to himself, but not to our Creator. “As I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live; turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways; for why will ye die?” [Ezekiel 33:11.]  {GC88 535.2}

What would be gained to God should we admit that he delights in witnessing unceasing tortures; that he is regaled with the groans and shrieks and imprecations of the suffering creatures whom he holds in the flames of hell? Can these horrid sounds be music in the ear of Infinite Love? It is urged that the infliction of endless misery upon the wicked would show God's hatred of sin as an evil which is ruinous to the peace and order of the universe. Oh, dreadful blasphemy! As if God's hatred of sin is the reason why he perpetuates sin. For, according to the teachings of these theologians, continued torture without hope of mercy maddens its wretched victims, and as they pour out their rage in curses and blasphemy, they are forever augmenting their load of guilt. God's glory is not enhanced by thus perpetuating continually increasing sin through ceaseless ages.  {GC88 536.1}

It is beyond the power of the human mind to estimate the evil which has been wrought by the heresy of eternal torment. The religion of the Bible, full of love and goodness, and abounding in compassion, is darkened by superstition and clothed with terror. When we consider in what false colors Satan has painted the character of God, can we wonder that our merciful Creator is feared, dreaded, and even hated? The appalling views of God which have spread over the world from the teachings of the pulpit have made thousands, yes, millions, of skeptics and infidels.  {GC 536.2}
The theory of eternal torment is one of the false doctrines that constitute the wine of the abomination of Babylon, of which she makes all nations drink. Revelation 14:8; 17:2. That ministers of Christ should have accepted this heresy and proclaimed it from the sacred desk is indeed a mystery. They received it from Rome, as they received the false sabbath. True, it has been taught by great and good men; but the light on this subject had not come to them as it has come to us. They were responsible only for the light which shone in their time; we are accountable for that which shines in our day. If we turn from the testimony of God's word, and accept false doctrines because our fathers taught them, we fall under the condemnation pronounced upon Babylon; we are drinking of the wine of her abomination.  {GC 536.3}

A large class to whom the doctrine of eternal torment is revolting are driven to the opposite error. They see that the Scriptures represent God as a being of love and compassion, and they cannot believe that He will consign His creatures to the fires of an eternally burning hell. But holding that the soul is naturally immortal, they see no alternative but to conclude that all mankind will finally be saved. Many regard the threatenings of the Bible as designed merely to frighten men into obedience, and not to be literally fulfilled. Thus the sinner can live in selfish pleasure, disregarding the requirements of God, and yet expect to be finally received into His favor. Such a doctrine, presuming upon God's mercy, but ignoring His justice, pleases the carnal heart and emboldens the wicked in their iniquity.  {GC 537.1}